

# Charlotte County Weekly Department Highlights

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## Community Services

### Charlotte Sports Park

The Charlotte Sports Park hosted the following Tampa Bay Rays Spring Training home games (attendance in parentheses): Friday, Feb. 28 – Baltimore Orioles (4112) and Sunday, March 2 – Minnesota Twins (4709).

Upcoming Activities: The Charlotte Sports Park will be hosting the following Tampa Bay Rays Spring Training home games this week: Monday, March 3 – Philadelphia Phillies @ 1:05 PM; Wednesday, March 5 – New York Yankees @ 1:05 PM; and Saturday, March 8 – Pittsburgh Pirates @ 1:05 PM.

### Harold Avenue Recreation

Pickleball is still on the rise at Harold Avenue Recreation Center. Last week the center experienced a 29% increase in participation. The playing opportunities available are Monday through Thursday from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Fridays from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Stop by and see what the hype is all about. In other news, Participation in Tae Kwon Do, Tai Chi, Zumba, and Table Tennis continue to remain steady.

### Port Charlotte Beach and Recreation

At PCB on Thursday 2/27/2014 The Charlotte Promenaders had their biggest turnout yet, with over 115 laughing and dancing people who made a night of it.

The Charlotte County Sheriff's Office put on the "Celebrate Safe Communities 2014" This was a park wide event open to the public. There were 20 neighborhoods represented each with a table decorated to showcase their community. There were awards given for most creative, most original, most informative and the most coveted award, the most accomplished above and beyond their neighborhood watch. First place was awarded for sending care packages to service men and women of their community throughout the year!

This was a great event. What's even more impressive are the statistics of the good that these neighborhood watches have provided. Crime rates in these communities are way down and the crimes that are committed are quickly solved. All awards were presented personally by Sheriff Bill Prummell. Congratulations to all!

Port Charlotte Beach Pool had 305 paid admissions, was visited by 86 pass holders and had 122 water aerobics participants.

### South County Regional Park

For the week of 2-23 through 3-1 South County Regional Park Pool had 168 paid admissions, 29 water aerobics participants and was visited by 139 pass holders. The swim team held nine practices, with attendance of approx. 350.

### Oyster Creek Regional Pool

For the week of 2-26 through 3-4, Oyster Creek Regional Park Pool had 295 paid admissions, was visited by 134 pass holders and had 163 water aerobics participants. The Charlotte County Blue Fins held 5 swim practices resulting in approximately 100 "splashes."

### Extension Services

Newspaper Article for March 3 – "Garden glory"

Managers Meeting – March 3 – 1 to 3 p.m. – Mid-County Library

2014 Master Gardener Orientation – 9 a.m. to 12 noon – March 4

Burnt Store Lakes POA – Pruning Talk – March 4 – 2 p.m. - 16500 Burnt Store Rd., #102

2014 Master Garden Training Class # 1- Pesticides/Vines – 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Ag Venture - insects/creepy crawlers – Turner Center – 7:30 a.m. – March 7

## Facilities Construction & Maintenance

### Repairs and Maintenance

Hathaway Park Observation Deck and ADA ramp to floating dock are 100% complete.

### Project Management

The SWFWMD permit has been approved for the Franz Ross parking and drainage improvements.

The Punta Gorda Library sealing was applied on Sunday and striping was completed Monday morning. Punta Gorda Library was the final phase of this multi-site parking lot repairs and improvement project.

Insulation upgrades are in progress as part of the energy performance contract. This work has been completed in the Justice Center, South County Annex and the Eastport Environmental campus. Insulation and building weatherization are scheduled to begin at the Sheriff's Administration facility on Thursday March 6th.

## Human Services

Tampa Bay Rays Veterans Appreciation Day-300 tickets were given out for free to area Veterans. This event was attended by David Donohew.

The NAB/Civil Citation program served 42 youth, held 4 boards, closed 9 cases, conducted 0 intakes and had 30 volunteer hours contributed to the program.

## Public Works

### Active Construction Projects (may affect vehicular/boater/pedestrian traffic patterns)

**2014 County Paving Program** - This program provides for the resurfacing of roads in Greater Port Charlotte and the Road & Bridge Districts. 2014 paving maps area available on the public Web site. Paving on Veterans Boulevard is complete; restoration is underway. The traffic loop installation on Veterans Boulevard began March 4, 2014. Shoulder restoration on Midway Boulevard is complete; sod will be complete by March 7, 2014. The Contractor will begin base repairs on Rio De Janeiro Friday, March 7, 2014.

**Dredging - Northwest Port Charlotte Waterways** – This project will facilitate safe navigation by providing new access channels into the waterway system connecting to the Myakka River navigation channel. This is a new channel, over one mile long, that extends and connects three waterways to the Myakka River channel. This project consists of design, engineering, permitting and construction of the new channel. The contractor is dredging the mouths of the Venus and Cheshire Waterways. Heavy rain conditions over the summer, early winter tides and cold fronts hampered progress. The contractor requested and was granted a time extension; the new contract ending date is March 13, 2014.

**Dredging – Suncoast Waterway** – This project is designed to facilitate safe navigation within the Suncoast Waterway system by removing 18,000 cubic yards of silted material. The contractor completed most of the upland portion of the dredging and continues with the outside and the northeastern portions however early winter tides hampered progress. As of Jan. 14, 2014 the contractor had approximately 2,000 feet of work remaining in the new access channel. Due to severe cold fronts the contractor was limited in the ability to dredge and requested additional time added to the contract. After a review process was completed, the request for additional time was granted; the new contract end date is March 5, 2014. The Contractor is revisiting areas that did not meet design specifications from the last as-built surveys.

**Winchester Boulevard South Extension** – This project includes the construction of a new four-lane connector from Placida Road to the Charlotte/Sarasota County line, with a direct connection to I-75 via River Road in Sarasota County. As construction progresses, the final design/permitting of the intersection of SR 776/Winchester will occur and the intersection improvements will be rolled into this project.

Gopher tortoise relocations are complete. Utility relocations are complete on West Drive, Telman Road, and Sesame Road and the installation of temporary erosion control devices (silt fencing) is complete. Clearing and grubbing continues throughout the entire project. Storm drain installation is underway on the southern end of the project.

We urge citizens in the area to remain outside of the clearly delineated project limits. Large heavy equipment is being used and we want to keep everyone safe.

Negotiations continue with the design consultant for a scope and fee modifying the plans at the Winchester Boulevard North/SR 776 intersection to include a right turn lane onto Winchester Boulevard North.

*PSA issued 01/09/14: Construction is underway on the Winchester Boulevard South roadway extension. This project provides for a new three-mile-long, four-lane divided roadway, from S.R. 776 south to C.R. 775 (Placida Road). Construction includes roadway lighting, sidewalks, drainage improvements and utility work to be completed in conjunction with Charlotte County Utilities and Englewood Water District. Major components of the project include signalization of both the S.R. 776 and Placida Road intersections. When completed, this project will result in a four-lane connector from Placida Road to the Charlotte/Sarasota County line, with a direct connection to I-75 via River Road within Sarasota County. To carry out construction activities, the following roads will be closed on January 10, 2014: Aloha Avenue at Winchester Boulevard, Apple Valley Avenue at Winchester Boulevard, Brookhaven Terrace at Winchester Boulevard, Worth Avenue at Winchester Boulevard, Sunset Road North at Sunset Circle, Rifle Road at Indian Creek Drive, Cougar Way at Indian Creek Drive, Opal Drive at Telman Drive, Sunset Road at Telman Drive, Cypress Road at Short Street, West Drive at Sunset Road, West Drive at Flower Drive and Glades Drive at West Drive.*

## **Construction Projects in Design or Negotiation**

**Sidewalks - Gardens of Gulf Cove** – The Gardens of Gulf Cove MSBU Committee requested that sidewalks be installed from the current end of the sidewalk on Coniston Street to Englewood Road and on Coliseum Boulevard from Englewood Road to Drucker Circle.

The construction contract is currently advertised for bid. The Pre-bid Conference was held February 13, 2014 and Bid Opening is scheduled Feb. 26, 2014.

## **Coastal Projects**

**Alligator Creek -6 Feet Dredging c391302** – The Alligator Creek Waterway MSBU Committee requested that the County design and apply for a permit to dredge the navigable waterways within the Alligator Creek MSBU to a depth of -6 feet MLW. It is anticipated that a significant amount of time may be required to negotiate with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to issue permits for the dredging within the Alligator Creek to more than a depth of -5 feet, which is the depth for the current permit.

Natural resource investigations are complete - no impact to sea grasses, hard bottom or oysters exists. The geotechnical study is complete. Rock was located however no continuous rock is exposed at the surface. No rock shelf exists containing soft corals or other hard bottom habitats. The permit plans and exhibits were submitted to the permitting agencies in February 2014 and are under review.

**Buena Vista Grassy Point Waterway Maintenance Dredging** - Maintenance dredging provides continued safe navigation for citizens who utilize the waterways. This project provides for engineering, design and permitting to dredge the lateral channels and 500 feet into the interior canals to determine the amount of material needed to be removed to restore safe navigation.

A Request for Letters of Interest (RLI) was submitted to begin the process of obtaining engineering support to accomplish this project. County staff will review and rank the submittals upon receipt. Staff reviewed the submittals and negotiations are underway to secure an engineering firm.

**Gulf Cove Waterway Maintenance Dredging** - Maintenance dredging provides continued safe navigation for citizens who utilize the waterways. This project provides for engineering, design and permitting to dredge the lateral/access channels and 100 feet into the interior canals. The amount of material to be removed will be determined as engineering and design progresses. A Request for Letters of Interest was submitted to the Purchasing Department to begin the process of obtaining a qualified engineering firm. More information will be provided as it becomes available. Design is projected to be underway in late spring 2014.

**Harbor Heights Waterway Maintenance Dredging** - This project consists of maintenance dredging existing man-made canals and access channels to their permitted conditions to restore safe navigation within the waterway system. The Consultant is in the process of gathering survey and permitting data. This phase should be complete in March with submittal to the permitting agencies in late March 2014. Most field data collection (survey) is complete; project design is underway.

**Pirate Harbor Access Channel** – Dredging provides safe navigation for citizens who utilize the waterways. This project provides for engineering, design and permitting to dredge 2,300 feet of access channel that was not covered under previous permitting. The amount of material to be removed will be determined as engineering and design progresses. This project was recommended and approved by the Pirate Harbor Waterway Advisory Committee.

Now that the Pirate Harbor rock ledges have been removed, staff is in the process of adding the engineering and design of the Pirate Harbor Access Channel to the previous contract. This project was originally presented to FDEP in 2003/04 however at that time FDEP did not view this project as favorable and it was removed from the original contract. Recently it has been determined that this process would be viewed by the permitting agencies as more acceptable and will require a standard general permit to dredge 2,300 feet of the access channel. Coastal Engineering Consultants will continue their work on this project with a new permit application.

## **Drainage Projects**

**Charlotte Harbor Watershed Management - Stormwater Structures Phase 2** - This project shall follow Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) guidelines consistent with the District's Watershed Management Program. Three components are proposed: Topographic Information, Watershed Evaluation and a Watershed Management Plan. The Watershed Management Plan developed includes the installation of stormwater structures on Church Street and Bayshore Road (BMP 6) and Harper Avenue (BMP 29) as Phase 1 of this project, which is complete. Phase 2 is located on Central Avenue near Oakley Street (BMP25), near Church Street (BMP26) and near Main Street (BMP42). A work order was issued to Giffels-Webster to begin design on Feb. 6, 2014.

## **Maintenance & Operations**

1. Two Outfall crews completed nine swale intersection conversions (installed pipe where a swale in the road existed) in Northwest Port Charlotte. Work includes laying asphalt over the new pipe.
2. 1.4 miles of shoulder repairs were completed on Como Street from Edgewater Drive to S.R. 776.
3. An Outfall crew replaced driveway pipes in Greater Port Charlotte, Punta Gorda and the Road and Bridge District. General clean-up and sod is forthcoming.
4. The Community Appearance crew mowed and cleaned trash in the rights-of-way on Piper Road and Cheney Way in advance of the Cheney Brothers groundbreaking ceremony held March 5, 2014.
5. The grapple crew picked up 9,940 pounds of trash and debris from the rights-of-ways throughout Charlotte County.

## Other Projects

**Manasota Key Community Plan Design** – The Manasota Key MSTU Committee requested the development of a Community Plan including, but not limited to, sidewalks, bike paths, crosswalks and lighting. The first phase of this project consisted of a conceptual master plan completed by Weiler Engineering in December 2013. Phase 2 is the design of construction ready plans consisting of the top priorities as identified by the MSTU Committee. The Manasota Key Community Plan was presented to the MSTU Committee on December 11, 2013. The MSTU Committee requested that staff move forward with designing sidewalks, bike lanes, landscaping as well as street light replacements on Gulf Boulevard and the redesign of the commercial area to allow for additional parking and stormwater redesign. A Request for Proposals is currently advertised. The Pre-Submittal Conference was held February 27, 2014 and proposals are due on March 12, 2014.

**Rotonda West Entry Features** – This project will provide new signs at five (5) locations throughout the community. Signs will include landscaping and lighting. Funding is provided from assessments in the Rotonda West Street and Drainage Unit. A pre-construction meeting was held with Keesling Construction and the Notice to Proceed should be issued early to mid-March 2014. Construction is projected to be complete 120 calendar days after commencement.

## U.S. 41 Microtunnel/Weir Project Update

This project consists of microtunneling culverts under U.S. 41 at the Fordham, Elkcarn, and Pompano Waterways, consisting of the replacement of existing culverts at the Northbound & Southbound U.S. 41 Access Roads at the Pompano Waterway and at Elmira Boulevard, replacement of stand-alone weirs across the Elkcarn Waterway, north of the U.S. 41 Access Road and across the Fordham Waterway, north of the U.S. 41 Access Road and construction of a new weir across the Pompano Waterway north of the U.S. 41 Northbound Access Road. The project includes sidewalks, major drainage improvements, Charlotte County Utility (CCU) relocations and improvements, street lighting, site dewatering, flow diversion, excavation and fill, fabric form, bank & shore rip-rap placement, grading, sodding, and maintenance of traffic.





Construction is underway at the Pompano Waterway. Construction crews are working on the retaining walls and 60 inch storm pipes that are being placed under the U.S. 41 northbound and southbound Access Roads and are building the foundation for the water control structure (weir) upstream of the northbound Access Road. Huxted Tunneling is currently preparing the boring pits on the northbound side to receive the tunnel boring machine head. The receiving pit on the southbound side is being prepared to receive the machine head after it passes under U.S. 41 where a crane will lift the equipment and return it to the boring pit in order to bore a second tunnel. Crews anticipate the boring process will begin the last week of March and this portion of the project should be finished by the end of May, 2014. The contractors will then move the construction equipment to the Elkcarn Waterway. This project is designed to increase stormwater flow under U.S. 41 in conjunction with the Midway Boulevard Phase II road widening project.



*The bottom half of this photo shows the two boring pits and a crane right next to U.S. 41; this is the northbound side of the project. The microtunneling equipment begins its journey beneath U.S. 41 from this location. The larger area in the bottom-right corner in front of the white truck is the new weir which will control the flow of stormwater under U.S. 41.*



*This photo shows the receiving pit next to U.S. 41; this is the southbound side. Once the microtunneling equipment reaches this side, a crane will return the bore head to the boring pit to make a second pass beneath U.S. 41. At the bottom of this photo are 60 inch direct-bury pipes being placed beneath the northbound and southbound access roads.*

## **Tourism**

Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau staff traveled to New York City last month (Feb. 25) to participate in a luncheon for members of the media. VISIT FLORIDA arranged the event which was attended by media outlets ranging from traditional print publications to online magazines and blogs. The writers and editors represented publications as Travel & Leisure, Good Morning America and Fodors.com. Staff shared what's new in Charlotte County in order to provide story ideas for future newspaper, magazine and online articles.